

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 525

By Carter

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Commissioner Hazel R. Albert on the occasion of her retirement from state government.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pay tribute to those exemplary professionals and remarkable public servants who have contributed significantly to the growth and prosperity of this state during their meritorious careers in state government; and

WHEREAS, no state employee could be more deserving of this special recognition than the inimitable Hazel R. Albert, former Commissioner of Employment Security; and

WHEREAS, a career state employee, Ms. Albert held many positions in the Department of Employment Security, working her way up through the ranks by means of her dedication, commitment to serving Tennesseans, proficiency and professionalism; and

WHEREAS, she served as Chief and as Director, and in 1987, was appointed Assistant Commissioner for Unemployment Insurance. In 1995, she was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Department and served as Commissioner of Employment Security from 1996-1999; and

WHEREAS, she distinguished herself as a tireless worker, working long hours and weekends when necessary to accomplish the goals of the Department; and

WHEREAS, during the course of her illustrious career, Hazel Albert was recognized nationally for her knowledge and expertise in employment and workforce programs, and was often called upon by the U.S. Government and by other states to assist in resolving problems; and

WHEREAS, she always evidenced unwavering dedication to the Department's programs, which provide assistance to workers and employers. She demonstrated concern for the unemployed workers, while maintaining appropriate consideration for the employers who pay for the system; and

WHEREAS, as the Deputy and Commissioner of Employment Security, Ms. Albert implemented programs that have provided a more cost-effective, efficient and customer-focused service. She also formulated a new mission, vision and values statement that was compiled with the input of all the department's employees statewide; and

WHEREAS, under her exemplary leadership, the Tennessee Department of Employment Security received the U.S. Department of Labor's Region IV Quality Award for three years, and the National U.S.D.O.L.'s Compass Award for an automated partial claim filing system; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Albert developed an employer outreach program that took government to the people by providing seminars in fourteen cities across the state; and

WHEREAS, she led a training initiative that is taking the staff of the agency into the new millennium by providing them with computerized training to improve their computer and interpersonal skills; and

WHEREAS, the very epitome of the concerned and competent public servant, Hazel Albert has served on numerous boards that promote economic stability and address employment issues. In 1991, she was awarded the AFL-CIO Award for her "dedication, integrity and compassion to the working men and women of Tennessee"; and

WHEREAS, over the years, she served astutely on the national work committees for the Interstate Conference of Employment Security Agencies, including the Unemployment Insurance Committee and the Finance and Administration Committee. She is a long-time member of the Tennessee Chapter of the International Association of Personnel in Employment Security, and she provided the administrative support to bring the 1996 International Convention to Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, she was instrumental in developing the Unemployment Insurance New Hire program, which saved millions of dollars to the state's trust fund and was a national model; and

WHEREAS, through landmark legislation, she helped to mold a solvent Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund that is responsive to economic trends, is employer friendly, and meets the needs of claimants; and

WHEREAS, Commissioner Albert also assisted with the passage and implementation of Tennessee's Job Skills program, and she directed the Department's initiative to establish partnerships with other state agencies in the development and implementation of Tennessee's Families First program; and

WHEREAS, she assisted with the opening of five Tennessee Career Centers, with Employment Security serving as a partner agency to implement Workforce Development; and

WHEREAS, Hazel Albert can be best described as knowledgeable, fair, and compassionate. In spite of a busy schedule, she always took the time to address the problems of clients and to talk one-on-one with individuals who wanted and needed her assistance; and

WHEREAS, she was a valuable mentor to new staff joining the agency; she graciously shared her knowledge of operations and procedures with her staff, thus assuring a quality and well-trained organization for the future; and

WHEREAS, as an accomplished administrator, Hazel Albert earned the respect of all the Department's employees. She always recognized that state employees are dedicated, talented and conscientious and can make any effort a success; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Albert readily assisted members of the General Assembly, not only during session, but also throughout the year, in resolving the problems of their constituents; and

WHEREAS, she was always straightforward and truthful with legislators. Even though she may not have always been in a position to provide the answer everyone wanted, she carefully explained the situation at hand and earned the respect of both organized labor and management organizations in the process; and

WHEREAS, when she testified before a committee of the General Assembly, she could always be depended upon to provide full and accurate information; and

WHEREAS, Hazel Albert's retirement is a loss to state government, the public as a whole and this General Assembly; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and commend Hazel R. Albert for over forty-five years of meritorious service to the Department of Employment Security and the people of Tennessee. Her retirement has created a void that will not be easily filled, and her consummate professionalism and incomparable work ethic will be sorely missed in state government and beyond.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we wish for Ms. Albert a happy and fulfilling retirement and all the best in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.